

PSITTACOSIS

I. IDENTIFICATION

- A. **CLINICAL DESCRIPTION:** A respiratory disease caused by *Chlamydia psittaci*. The illness is characterized by fever, chills, headache, photophobia, cough, and myalgia.
- B. **REPORTING CRITERIA:** Laboratory diagnosis.
- C. **LABORATORY CRITERIA FOR CONFIRMATION:**
- Isolation of *C. psittaci* from a clinical specimen, **OR**
 - Fourfold or greater change in antibody against *C. psittaci* by complement-fixation (CF) or microimmunofluorescence (MIF) to a reciprocal titer of ≥ 32 between paired acute- and convalescent-phase serum specimens, **OR**
 - Presence of IgM antibody against *C. psittaci* by microimmunofluorescence (MIF) to a reciprocal titer of ≥ 16 .
- D. **KENTUCKY CASE DEFINITION:** A clinically compatible illness that is laboratory confirmed.

NOTE: Because of cross-reactivity, psittacosis must be distinguished from lymphogranuloma venereum infections using clinical signs.

II. ACTIONS REQUIRED / PREVENTION MEASURES

- A. **KENTUCKY DISEASE SURVEILLANCE REQUIRES URGENT NOTIFICATION:** REPORT TO THE LOCAL OR STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT **IMMEDIATELY** upon recognition of a case or suspected case in a time period not greater than 24 hours. If health department personnel cannot be contacted directly, notification shall be made by electronic submission or by telephone to the emergency number of the Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning: **1-888-973-7678**.
- B. **EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORTS REQUIRED:**
1. Kentucky Reportable Disease Form – EPID 200 (Rev. Jan/03).
 2. National Psittacosis Surveillance Report- Human Infection – PHS 4.93 CDC.
- C. **PREVENTION MEASURES:**
- Educate persons with high risk for exposure (pet owners, zoo personnel, pet shop operators and poultry processors) to signs and symptoms of disease. Care should be used in cleaning bird housing to minimize contamination of surrounding environments.

D. PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS:

- Infected birds should be treated or destroyed.
- Source investigation: The most common source of infection is exposure to infected psittacine (parrot-like) birds, particularly parrots, parakeets, and lovebirds, although pigeons and poultry (particularly turkeys) may serve as reservoirs. Bird cages, roosts and other housing may harbor the organisms in bird droppings.

III. CONTACTS FOR CONSULTATION

- A. KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, SURVEILLANCE AND HEALTH DATA BRANCH: 502-564-3418.
- B. KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, COMMUNICABLE DISEASE BRANCH: 502-564-3261.
- C. KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, DEPARTMENT FOR LABORATORY SERVICES: 502-564-4446

IV. RELATED REFERENCES

1. Compendium of Measures to Control *Chlamydia psittaci* Infection Among Humans (Psittacosis) and Pet Birds (Avian Chlamydiosis), 2000: MMWR July, 2000, Vol. 49 (No. RR-8).
2. Chin, James, ed. PSITTACOSIS. In: Control of Communicable Diseases Manual. 17th ed. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2000: 405-407.
3. Pickering, LK, ed. *Chlamydia psittaci* (Psittacosis, Ornithosis). In: 2000 Red Book: Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 25th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: 206-207.